

were in the news—sadly, always in the news—are documented very well in our textbooks, but much of the military discrimination against African Americans was not documented very well.

I want to take a minute today to thank those African American soldiers who fought during World War II for their valor and sacrifice for our country.

You may not have heard of the 320th battalion, but on the morning of June 6, 1944, the unit of African American soldiers landed on the beaches of France. Their orders were to man a curtain of armed balloons meant to deter enemy aircraft. They flew at an altitude of about 200 feet to defend soldiers landing on the beaches against strafing attacks by German aircraft. The battalion served 140 days in France.

One member of the 320th battalion wounded in battle, Waverly B. Woodson, Jr., would later be nominated for the Medal of Honor, an award he would never receive.

The Nation's highest decorations were not given to African American soldiers in World War II. Members of the 320th battalion, the first African American battalion, which included hundreds of soldiers, were sent abroad to fight for liberties denied to them at home.

The story of the 320th battalion is a narrative of perseverance in the face of injustice.

Earlier this week, I had the pleasure to be invited by Representative KATHERINE CLARK from Massachusetts to go hear the story of "D-Day Girls: The Spies Who Armed the Resistance, Sabotaged the Nazis, and Helped Win World War II" by women who played a very crucial role in the military and spycraft that helped us during World War II. Of course, throughout time, much of their role was relegated to being said that they were secretaries and answered phones, but they played very critical roles.

I know one of my former constituents who passed away not too long ago, Robert Starr, was part of an ambulatory crew that helped pick up the wounded and remains of people who were dead on the beaches of Normandy. Again, the story told was that African American soldiers worked in that role but that they were not part of the initial invasion.

Sadly, that has been memorialized in Hollywood, as well. I think one of the best movies about D-day of all time is "The Longest Day," a great, great movie. But, of course, there were no African American soldiers depicted in that movie. "Saving Private Ryan," another great movie, but, again, no African American soldiers were depicted in that movie, sadly.

It is my hope that we can raise more awareness about the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion, these men who fought so bravely during World War II, so that they, too, will not just be memorialized in the textbooks but that their story will be brought to Hollywood.

I am certain that there is a Rob Reiner or a Steven Spielberg or a Spike Lee or someone out there who will help tell the story of these women who fought during World War II and helped the resistance and also these African American soldiers whose stories have not been told.

It is absolutely amazing to me that there are many African Americans in this country even who, if you ask them, they think that there were no Black soldiers who fought during D-day. It is a story that has been allowed to be falsely perpetuated for far too long. It is time that we raise awareness about the 320th battalion and the great sacrifices that they made for this country.

#### CONGRATULATING MEL SHOWERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mel Showers upon his retirement from WKRG in Mobile, Alabama, after a remarkable 50-year career.

Mel holds a special place in the hearts of many in southwest Alabama and the Florida panhandle. So many grew up watching his reporting and grew to trust him over the years.

Mel's career is notable not only because of its length, but also because of the barriers he overcame to become one of the first African American reporters and, later, anchors in the Deep South. A man of lesser perseverance and integrity could not have overcome these obstacles with such grace.

Mel deserves our utmost respect, and we will miss seeing him every evening.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Mel. I offer my heartfelt thanks for his many contributions to our community over the years, and I wish him the best of luck in his retirement.

#### REMEMBERING BILLY MIDDLETON

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of the longtime mayor of Loxley, Alabama, Billy Middleton. After a long, hard-fought battle, Mayor Middleton succumbed to cancer last week at 78 years old.

Billy was first elected mayor in 1988, and before his passing, he was serving a remarkable seventh term.

His longevity was no accident. A former marine, Mayor Middleton was a true public servant whose dedication to his community extended far beyond his official duties and endeared him to the people of southwest Alabama. His community is better because he was a part of it.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my sincerest condolences to his wife, Lilly, and the many family and friends he leaves behind. Billy's memory and service to the close-knit town of Loxley will last long beyond his death.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 38 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BERA) at noon.

#### PRAYER

Reverend William Johnson, Immanuel United Church of Christ, Ellinwood, Kansas, offered the following prayer:

O God, we pause to recall and thank You for the blessings we have enjoyed down through the ages. These blessings You give us so often come by the hand of others.

Thank You for the Honorable men and women of the U.S. House of Representatives and all those in service of our great Nation.

As we approach Memorial Day, we gratefully remember men and women of the Armed Forces of the past, the present, and future.

Let us remember greatness is not the number of people that serve us but the number of people that we serve. Looking to past servants, let us do well the task that has been given our hands to do. May the season of graduation inspire us to grow in knowledge in order to equip ourselves as servants and citizens for God and country.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### WELCOMING REVEREND WILLIAM JOHNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I am often asked about what I value in life, and I speak of the four pillars of my life: faith, family, community, and education. Today I honor faith.